

exposures, particularly of the arterial tree, is excellent, and this work would therefore be of interest to surgeons engaged in microvascular reconstruction. For instance, the posterior calf muscle-splitting incision popularised among microsurgeons by Marco Godina is beautifully illustrated. However, gross anatomy does not change and the content of this section is no different from what is available in standard anatomical texts. In fact, the lack of reference to important anatomical variations and anomalies of the major arteries is perhaps a significant omission—an omission which would not be lost on the reconstructive microsurgeon.

The final section in this volume describes the "exposure" (*i.e.* dissection) of a selection of skin and muscle flaps—vastus lateralis, soleus, gastrocnemius, saphenous fasciocutaneous, dorsalis pedis (pedicled), medial plantar and lateral supramalleolar flaps. One assumes that these represent the personal selection of one or more of the authors, who emphasise in the Preface that this production offers a "holistic vision" of modern reconstruction which should enable the surgeon to "tackle compound lesions".

The book is intended primarily for orthopaedic surgeons and it is an excellent source of reference for surgery of the lower limb, particularly as it details anatomy in relation to orthopaedic exposures very well. However, it does not deal with operative technique other than exposure. The superb quality of the production makes it expensive but it is nevertheless recommended for libraries and perhaps operating theatres. The cost may make it prohibitive to the individual surgeon. The references are limited—23 in all, 15 of which are in the English language.

J. O. SMALL

**Decubitus Ulcers of the Pelvic Region.** By Nicholas J. Lüscher. (Seattle, Toronto, Bern, Göttingen, Hogrefe & Huber, Publishers, 1992). Pp 152, ill. (149 figs). ISBN 0-88937-049-4. Price DM 188.

In his preface to this compact and well presented new work, P. G. Arnold laments the Cinderella status of the subject of pressure sores and their treatment. The author, Dr Nicholas Lüscher, belies this fact by the vigour, thoroughness, and singlemindedness of his approach to the subject. The book is a true monograph representing his long experience and, in particular, a detailed analysis of a prospective series of some 140 pressure sores treated by him during an intensive study of 2794 surgical inpatients in his unit over a period of 4 years.

The book is a translation and, in my view, suffers a certain loss of continuity, logic and organisation as a result but it is a treasure house of wisdom and good sense nevertheless. It will appeal to anybody with an interest in the subject but would probably be most useful for the reader who already has experience in the subject.

The work is very well illustrated with line drawings, black and white and colour photographs. There are sections on epidemiology, conservative management, general considerations of operative management and discussions on many, although not all, the flap techniques applicable to repair in the pelvic region.

I particularly enjoyed many of the simple tips given at random throughout the text; for example, the examination of patients while seated on a glass sheet and the advice to ligate appropriate segments of a Roho cushion in adapting the device to individual patients! There is a superb collection of references to the subject of pressure sores which is perhaps some compensation for the rather tragic absence of an index to the book. It is to be hoped that this omission will be corrected in a second edition.

At about £75 the book is reasonable value. As all Western populations grow older, the subject of pressure sores and their treatment will become more relevant every year. As the extent of the problem increases, other specialities will address the challenging problems involved unless plastic surgeons grasp the nettle so well addressed in this book and I would thoroughly recommend interested clinicians to read Dr Lüscher's work.

P. J. MAHAFFEY

**Functional Surgery of the Larynx and Pharynx.** Edited by Waryam Singh and David S. Soutar. (Butterworth-Heinemann Ltd, Oxford, London, Boston, 1993). Pp xii + 208, ill. Price £44.50. ISBN 0-7506-0612-6.

I am reliably informed that this multi-author book edited by Waryam Singh and David Soutar has taken 4 years to bring to fruition. This delay, which appears to be almost inevitable, must be a significant detraction for editors of these tomes.

In spite of the delay in going to print, this is a first class volume for those with an interest in the field of functional surgery of the larynx and pharynx. The full breadth of the topic is covered from voice production to voice rehabilitation.

There is little doubt that surgery for malignant tumours of the larynx has the most devastating consequence of all cancers of the head and neck. Patients understandably are resistant to the prospect of removal of the larynx; they feel that any alternative therapy must be preferable.

The scope of reconstructive surgery following pharyngo-laryngectomy in respect of the airway and the ability to swallow is covered by David Soutar. We are told by our ENT colleagues that the mode of the repair does have a profound influence on the final quality of the rehabilitated voice. It is thus important that we plastic surgeons, who are involved in head and neck oncological surgery, do consult and comply with the demands of our colleagues.

Fortunately, modern techniques have allowed us to move away from the artificial speech appliances and oesophageal speech and into the arena of 'fistula speech', thus enabling air to be passed through the normal pathway with a consequent improvement in the final result. Waryam Singh is one innovator of such a speech valve. There are alternative valves available; all these are frankly discussed.

This is a well constructed and presented book containing all the information required for those in this specific field. We all appreciate the importance of aspects of rehabilitation in head and neck cancer patients, the voice being perhaps more important than many others. Waryam and David are to be congratulated on their achievement.

N. M. BREACH

**Percutaneous Local Anaesthesia.** David Woolfson and Dermot McCafferty. (Ellis Horwood, NY, London, Toronto, 1993). Pp 270, ill. Price £65.

This monograph, from the vast Ellis Horwood Series in Pharmaceutical Technology, originates from the School of Pharmacy at Queen's University, Belfast. Its authors present an exhaustive treatise on the scientific background and the clinical usage of local anaesthetic agents administered topically onto intact skin. The authors declare, in the preface, that they have attempted to draw together the current state of knowledge on all aspects of percutaneous local anaesthesia into a source book for a wide range of readers including surgeons, anaesthetists, pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists. The book is divided into six major sections covering historical development, pain, the pharmacology of local anaesthetic drugs, percutaneous absorption of local anaesthetics, the formulation of local anaesthetics for percutaneous delivery and clinical applications. The authors write with unquestioned authority on the pharmaceutical aspects of their subject but one wonders whether they have taken on too much (particularly with regard to the more clinical sections of the text) without enlisting the help of specialist contributors. The text is clear but on occasion becomes tedious and over-detailed (for example Chapter 2.6 on the measurement and evaluation of pain) and is also apt to wander off the point (I question the relevance of sedative premedication in Chapter 6). Otherwise the content is sound and is reasonably illustrated with good line diagrams. The book is thoroughly and appropriately sprinkled with up-to-date references and the index is good. The presentation is attractive in hardback format although there are errors in typesetting (e.g. p. 217).

*Percutaneous Local Anaesthesia* undoubtedly fulfils its authors' aspirations as a source book. It is, however, over-priced, and has, in my view, little appeal for the practising plastic surgeon. It cannot be recommended as a purchase either for individual plastic surgeons or for their departmental libraries. It will, however, find a place on the shelves of schools of pharmacy.

R. EASTLEY